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beds. All these lands will never again become what they once were—regions of constant struggle and short-lived serenity, of poverty and its exploitation, of poetry, fervor, and sadness. Those of us who have, for example, seen peasant women trudging for many miles through the omnipresent dust to kneel for an hour at the shrines of Silesia will never forget either the fact or its meaning.

There is not a foot of the old soil of Central Europe which has not been consecrated by endurance for the sake of the things of the spirit and the mind. Indeed, I have sometimes wondered, reading the Polish and Silesian poets and novelists, why the longing to hold out should have persisted during many difficult centuries—why, for instance, Polish forests in thrall to the Czars should have hidden priest and ritual with such fidelity. Perhaps the explanation, in so far as it is of this world, can be found in the deep human urge for the preservation of identity. Custom and language were vital symbols of the self, and without them men felt they could not live. But stronger than all else was the deep, primitive, mystical desire for identification with Eternal Righteousness, manifest to the believer in the life of the Redeemer. To give up the faith was to surrender not merely one's self but the world as well.

To be sure these men and women were very human, often poverty-stricken and untutored, sometimes intolerant and oppressive. The effort to conserve themselves and their identity spilled over into moments of vengeful outrage inflicted upon others because they were different. Thus anti-Semitism has a long history in Eastern Europe studded with bloody pogroms. Although curbed in Austro-Hungarian regions it was latent there, too, as the shameful events of 1938 proved, but manifest elsewhere continuously with varying intensity. Or who can forget the repression of the Ukrainians in Poland under the Pilsudski government, the conflict between Czechs and Slovaks,